

GE 449

Midterm Examination



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- 1) Trust is an essential element in the relationship between people. List the main factors on which this trust is based:

- 1) *perception of honesty / motivation*
- 2) *perception of reliability and past performance*
- 3) *perception of competence and ability*

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- 2) "Rights Ethics" could be described as follows:

- a) Moral obligations arise because people have rights.
- b) We should exhibit behaviour that *rational people* would agree to in a hypothetical contracting situation.
- c) Each person is entitled to the maximum freedom compatible with an equal amount for others.
- d) An act is right if it is likely to produce the most good for the most people.

- 3) The public makes an assessment of trustworthiness based on information from a variety of sources that contribute to their experience and thus their knowledge. Name three main sources of this information:

- 1) media
- 2) past experiences
- 3) experiences of acquaintances

- 3) 4) Moral development for human beings is generally considered to progress through progressive "levels" as they mature. List them below along with a brief description of behavioural characteristic of someone at that level:

A pre-conventional person is self-serving and only acts to avoid punishment. Conventional is where people do as others do, and accept what is normal for the societal unit. Post-conventional is where people make their own decisions about what is right and should be done for the common good. A person at this level has moral autonomy, and makes decisions based on the context.

- 3) 5) Identify and briefly describe the main parts of a general process for resolving moral or ethical dilemmas:

First, the presence of a moral or ethical dilemma must be identified. Then, further information can be obtained about the situation and an analysis of the options can take place. Then, the option that has been decided to be the best must be acted upon.

- 2) 6) "Divine Command Ethics" can be described as:

- a) Acts are morally right when they follow "the rules"
- b) Moral obligations arise because people have rights.
- c) Right actions are commanded by God; wrong actions are forbidden by God
- d) During a declared war, right actions are those that follow orders from a higher command.

- 2 7) Which phrase best defines "Rule Utilitarianism"?
- a) Acts are morally right when they follow "the rules"
 - b) Believes that ethical decisions should be based on maximizing "goodness" (most good for the most people).
 - c) One should follow rules that, if generally followed, would produce the most good for the most people.
 - d) Normal conventions or rules of thumb may be broken if doing so will maximize good in a given situation.

- 4 8) Consider the following statements about "laws" and indicate whether each is generally True or False:

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- Laws protect the "public" from those who have only reached the contra-conventional level of moral development. (True or False?)
 - Laws can be thought of as an extension of "Act Utilitarianism", and attempt to define a guideline for acceptable behaviour. (True or False?)
 - Laws are a set of "rules" that are generally applied without exception. Any variation is debated before a "judgment" is made. (True or False?)
 - Laws are intended for a sub-set of the population whose moral development only reaches the pre-conventional level. (True or False?)

3 9) An analysis of various engineering codes of ethics by Oldenquist & Slowter concluded that there were three concepts that were consistently represented. List these three topics::

- 1) Protection and promotion of public interests
- 2) Define acceptable behaviour of those who follow them.
- 3) Determine acceptable standards for how work should be performed.

4 10) Professional Codes of Ethics can be helpful even though they may also have limitations. List two possible benefits as well as two limitations:

Benefits:

define acceptable behaviour
provide support and guidance
to those they regulate.

Limitations:

they can be vague
parts of the code may be in
conflict.

4 11) Alisdair MacIntyre, a virtue ethicist, considered "professional responsibility" a virtue that had several components. Indicate which of the following he included in this "virtue":

- self direction - self understanding, good moral judgment, moral autonomy, commitment, self discipline, integrity (Included or Not Included?)
- public spirited - focused on good of others, clients. Non maleficence as a minimum, strive for beneficence. (Included or Not Included?)
- team work - with all other groups, individuals (Included or Not Included?)
- proficiency – competence (Included or Not Included?)

4 12) Thomas Donaldson developed what he called the "rational empathy test" to help determine what constitutes an ethically acceptable practice for companies doing business in a foreign culture. Describe this test in relation to the question of whether or not it is appropriate to build a chemical plant in an economically underdeveloped country. The plan involves discharging effluent from the plant into a local lake. The effluent is not toxic, but the level discharged would exceed the environmental regulations in Canada (but not in the foreign country).

The test involves the determination of whether the plant would do more harm than good, taking into consideration the relative economic status of the people in the area as compared to Canada.

2 13) "Morals" can be defined simply as a set of ethical principles which guide behaviour.
0 Ethics are "concerned with the judgment of the goodness or badness of human action and character". (~~True~~ or False?)

2 14) A moral or ethical *dilemma* describes a situation in which two or more moral obligations, duties, rights, goods, or ideals come into conflict with one another, and it appears that one cannot satisfy all of them no matter which course of action is chosen. (~~True~~ or False?)

4 15) Western companies will frequently go "off shore" with certain business operations. As well as lower labour rates, workers are often willing to assume higher risk which leads to less stringent safety and environmental regulations. Briefly describe two obligations that a company should assume in order to ethically justify exploiting the workers' economic situation in this way.

The company should ensure that the workers have given their informed consent to work in the area, as well as not letting them sell to much of their safety. The company should also work towards improving the safety of the workers and all others involved in the operation

2 16) The phrase "Ethical behaviour follows from characteristics / traits that people acquire" best describes:

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a) Duty Ethics

b) Ethical Relativism

c) Ethical Egoism

d) Character Ethics

2 17) "We are basically selfish and driven by pursuit of our own long term interests" best describes:

a) Duty Ethics

b) Ethical Relativism

c) Ethical Egoism

d) Character Ethics

4 18) For companies doing business in a less developed nation, in addition to respecting foreign workers rights, Richard T. De George recognizes that compromises must often be made but still requires that companies do "more overall good than bad" for the host country. Briefly describe two specific conditions he suggests should be met:

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He suggests that companies re-invest their profits in the salaries and safety of workers, and that they only invest if that investment will not lead to further abuse of the population.

- 4 19) "Ethical Relativism" and "Moral Relationalism (or Contextualism)" are two alternate philosophies that can be used to guide behaviour for companies or individuals working in a foreign culture. Briefly describe the difference between these two approaches:

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Ethical relativism is determining what is ethical by comparing an act to the ethical standards of the culture it is taking place in. Moral Relationalism is determining what you consider to be ethical by comparing an act to what would be ethical in your own culture.

- 2) 20) "Act Utilitarianism" is best described as:
- a) Morally right actions are governed by a list of duties.
 - b) Acts are morally right when they follow "the rules"
 - c) Normal conventions or rules of thumb may be broken if doing so will maximize good in a given situation.
 - d) An act is right if it is likely to produce the most good for the most people.

- 2) 21) Which phrase can be used to best define "Duty Ethics"?
- a) Morally right actions are governed by a list of duties.
 - b) We should exhibit behaviour that *rational people* would agree to in a hypothetical contracting situation.
 - c) Right actions are commanded by God; wrong actions are forbidden by God
 - d) An act is right if it is likely to produce the most good for the most people.

- 22) Assume that you have the capabilities of the fictional character "Super[wo]man", *except* that you cannot "spin the earth backwards" to go back in time. Assume further that you are aware of two simultaneous situations in two different parts of the world: one that seriously threatens the lives of your immediate family (say a car accident), and the other where an imminent explosion could wipe out a good portion of a city block potentially killing hundreds of innocent citizens and causing extensive damage. Even with your super powers, you can only make it to *one* of the locations in time to prevent a disaster. Briefly analyze this situation from the perspective of two different ethical theories that would lead to conflicting decisions about which course to take.

act utilitarianism involves performing an act that does the most good for the most people, so the superhero would have to stop the explosion.

Rights ethics would suggest that Superman has the right to protect his family, and that this right gives him the responsibility to protect his family. From this perspective, he would save his family.

- 5 23) Use the "line drawing" method to help analyze the moral dilemma faced by the tobacco industry in deciding whether or not to sell cigarettes to the public. Include options like enhancing the addictive effects of nicotine and disclosing information to the public in your considerations.

- Don't sell cigarettes, disclose all information, reduce nicotine levels
 - sell cigarettes ^{legally}, disclose all information, reduce nicotine levels
 - sell cigarettes legally, disclose some information, reduce nicotine levels.
 - sell cigarettes legally, disclose some information, don't change nicotine levels
 - sell cigarettes legally, neither hide nor disclose information, don't change nicotine levels
 - sell cigarettes legally, hide some information, don't change nicotine levels
 - ~~sell cigarettes legally, hide some information, increase nicotine levels~~
 - sell cigarettes legally, hide most information, increase nicotine levels
 - sell cigarettes legally, hide all information, increase nicotine levels
 - sell cigarettes legally, suppress others information, increase nicotine levels
 - sell cigarettes to anyone, suppress information, increase nicotine content
 - sell cigarettes to anyone, suppress all information, increase nicotine
 - force people to smoke, suppress all information, increase nicotine content
 - switch all agricultural production to tobacco.

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- 24) In the "Foreign Assignment" case our subject was wondering what to do regarding a job posting in a foreign culture where he felt a woman would not be accepted in a business setting, even though he felt she was the best person for the job technically. Develop a small "flowchart" that may help make an ethically sound decision.



